

Christianity and Society

THE EAST HARLEM PROTESTANT PARISH

by

J. ARCHIE HARGRAVES

CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND THE PLANNED SOCIETY

by

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by

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by

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TO MEMBERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

An account of the program of the Spring Conference and the decisions made there appears on page 25. Some of the decisions will affect the program of the Fellowship for some time to come and deserve the careful attention of all the members.

It is hoped that members who have not sent a contribution during the current fiscal year (beginning last October) will do so as soon as possible. Many of our activities depend on meeting our budget, which has not been fully subscribed.

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EDITORIALS

Christians and the State of Israel

If anyone needed a proof of the ambiguous character of political judgments and decisions, the diversity of Christian convictions about Zionism would furnish it. The Christian Church has been so divided on this issue that it has been difficult for it to say anything upon the question officially. Missionary circles, particularly the missionaries in the Near East, have been almost unanimously opposed to the political program of Zionism. They have regarded Zionist objectives as unjust invasions of the rights and securities of the Arab world. A group in the Christian Church both here and in Britain, to which the present writer belongs, has espoused the cause of Zionism. A much larger group within the Church has been baffled by the question and has taken no consistent position.

One reason why opinions have been so diverse is that the frames of reference in which the "rights" of the various contestants are measured are so completely incongruous. If one has a frame of reference for which the geographic and political facts of the Near Eastern world furnish the main outlines, one is bound to come to the conclusion that the establishment of Israel as an independent state in a hitherto Arab sovereignty and amidst an Arab world is an unwarranted intrusion. One may also suspect that the western world has permitted this primarily because it was uneasy about its failure to give Jews either security or asylum in its own realm. Thus

one arrives at the conclusion that the political aims of Zionism represent a monstrous injustice. It is not altogether surprising that non-Jewish residents in this Near Eastern world should make their political judgments primarily in terms of this frame of reference.

There is however another frame of values. Its outlines are furnished by the following presuppositions: (1) That the Jews, as the only completely homeless people, have a right to a homeland. (2) That this ancient right has been given a new urgency by the terrible warfare of Nazism against the Jews, which included the slaughter of six million of their number. (3) That while the Jews have no particular immediate right to a homeland in Palestine, they did acquire some immediate rights there through the Balfour declaration in the First World War and they have some (though not easily definable) rights there because Palestine is their ancient homeland.

There is no possible standard of measurement by which one may measure the validity of the "rights" in the second frame of meaning against the "rights" within the first framework. That is why all debates upon this subject have been so inconclusive. Some Christians, who accepted the second framework originally, changed their mind when actual visits to the Near East made the first framework a vivid reality to them. Other Christians who saw the plight of the Jews in the DP camps changed their

minds, on the other hand, because the second framework of meaning became real to them.

Meanwhile the Jews, driven by a feverish resolution distilled out of the pain and suffering of past decades plus the longings of past centuries, have surmounted all obstacles and established an independent state. It is morally cynical to accept the *faits accomplis* of history as justified merely by historical success. But even the purest moralist will have to admit that many issues of history are thus decided. In this case the Arab world was not sufficiently united to challenge the Jewish policy; and even the hesitations of American and British policy contributed to the success of the Zionist program. A small movement with a strong sense of direction established itself amidst the confusions of policy both in the Arab world and among the imperial powers.

It is not necessary, however, to accept this accomplishment without moral consent. How can any one see the DP camps of Europe emptying their sorely tried population into this new state without a sense of moral approbation? Is it not good that thousands, who faced the ultimate in horror and degradation, should have this chance to live and build a new nation? And may not this nation of highly intelligent people become a creative force in the Near East, introducing both a technical and a democratic civilization into the decaying feudalism of that world? Nor can one withhold one's admiration for the actions of the more favored Jews of the world, who raise millions upon millions of dollars to finance the immigrants. Let anyone who raises the suspicion of "dual loyalty" against the Jews for their sacrificial interest in their sorely tried brethren ask himself whether the charge does not proceed from a framework of values in which loyalty to a single nation is made into an intolerable and idolatrous absolute.

But even those of us who look upon the great political adventure of the Jews from this standpoint are bound to have some

reservations about this enterprise. Most of them are concerned with the relation of religion to nationalism. What will the Zionist Rabbis preach about once this state is securely established? Have they a religious message transcending immediate religious objectives? Does not the complete identification of the meaning of life with a particular political program betray a sorry state of affairs in Jewish religious life? And will not this state of affairs harass the spiritual life of the new state of Israel as well as the Jewish communities outside of Israel? How will the secular nationalists of Israel come to terms with the religious nationalists of the new state? One has a slightly embarrassed hope that the secularists of Israel will triumph over the religious nationalists, who would establish a clerical state. Dr. Ernst Simons, one of the truly profound religious leaders of Israel, reports that some of the young patriots of the new nation are inclined to reject every dimension of prophetic thought which does not conform with their new nationalism as a form of theological defeatism, relevant to another age but not to theirs. One draws the conclusion from such movements of thought that a secularism which completely rejects the prophets is preferable to a religion which corrupts their deepest insights.

Perhaps it is this uncritical religious nationalism which also tempts the Jews to be callous in regard to the plight of Arab refugees and generally to be too certain of the complete justice of their cause. It may even be true that the Arab refugees did not merely flee, as is usually assumed, but that there were many cases of atrocities against them. At least there are increasing reports from missionary circles in the Near East of such atrocities, which are never reported in our papers. If the Jews are finally to establish viable economic and political relations with the Arab world, they will require a greater sense of moral humility and some contrition about the moral ambiguity in all forms of political justice, including the justice which grants them a homeland in Palestine. They must not be quite so cer-

tain that justice to the Jews is inevitably just to the Arabs also, however great may be the opportunities for raising Arab living standards through the technology of a Jewish state.

It is a spiritually dangerous enterprise to relate a rigorous monotheistic faith to the ambitions of a single nation. If this is done without reservation the resulting fanaticism may be worse than that which a simple secular nationalism generates. On this point the anti-Zionist "Council of Judaism" has certainly been right. The spiritual problem of Judaism in the coming period lies in correlating what was politically justified in Zionism with what was religiously right in the position of the Jewish anti-Zionists.

The Spiritual Weakness of the Third Force

Marxism arose as a political and spiritual protest against the bourgeois world. Its collectivism was a reaction to bourgeois individualism. Its program for the socialization of property was the answer to the middle class belief in the absolute character of property rights. The collectivism of orthodox Marxism proved to be as mistaken as bourgeois individualism. No human self is as discrete an "I" as middle class life assumed; but neither can it be lost as simply in a collective "we" as pure Marxism believes. The idea of the collectivization of property also proved as erroneous as the middle class glorification of the institution of property. Property rights are not absolute; but neither are they the sole cause of injustice in society. The evils of the tyrannical communist state are the consequence of these miscalculations in orthodox Marxist theory.

Modern liberal or democratic socialism, which together with various forms of Christian conservatism holds the "middle ground" in Europe and which seeks to develop a "third force" between capitalism and communism, seeks to preserve some of the values of a Christian or a liberal cul-

ture, and to avoid some of the worst excesses derived from Marxist illusions. It loves liberty too much to accept communist totalitarianism; and it is politically too circumspect to have full confidence in the redemptive power of either a total revolution or the total collectivization of all property.

This third force is, however, spiritually weak. Its spiritual weakness is greater than its political weakness. Politically it has been stronger than one might have anticipated. Its political strength has been derived from the purely negative factor of fear: the fear of communism. Thus the middle ground in France has been able to ward off both a Gaullist and a communist dictatorship. In Italy a part of the socialist movement is a prisoner of communism and another part is a prisoner of an increasingly reactionary "Christian Democratic" party. Yet the fear of communism has given the right a political victory, despite the desperate poverty of the Italian peasants, which "Christian democracy" is doing very little to cure.

If the "third force" is to gain a spiritual foundation, adequate for its political task not only in Europe but in Asia, both the Christian and the quasi-Marxist elements in it must engage in much more serious reassessment of their several social philosophies than they have thus far been willing to venture. Catholic Christianity in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Italy has not extricated itself from its historic alliance with feudalism. Thus it plays into the hands of communism, no matter how desperately and self-righteously it poses as the champion of spiritual values and the "rights of man." Whether Catholic politics can achieve the pragmatic attitude toward property and the spiritual freedom from feudal reaction exhibited by the best elements in the Catholic parties of the German Rhineland and of France is a question upon which the spiritual and political health of the "third force" depends to a large degree.

Protestant Christianity in America and in western Europe is, on the other hand, still

involved in the error of identifying bourgeois individualism with a religious individualism. Bourgeois individualism makes the individual "I" too self-sufficing, thus destroying the spiritual basis of the community. And it makes the claims of the "my," embodied in the institution of property, too absolute, thus preventing a technical society from dealing with the threat of centralized economic power to the cause of justice. Religious individualism, at its best, knows that there is a final pinnacle of human selfhood which can not be understood, fulfilled, or redeemed merely in the context of a particular human community. But it also knows something of the social dimension of the self, its need of community; and of the tortuous, ambiguous, and pragmatic methods which must be adopted in a community to bring the power of property and of government into the service of justice.

It is because both Catholic and Protestant Christianity have erred so greatly in dealing with the sins of both a feudal and a bourgeois society (or rather in failing to deal with these sins) that all Christian strictures upon Marxism, whether of the communist or the socialist variety, are intolerable if unaccompanied by decent contrition. American Protestants who identify the idolatries of the "free enterprise system" and the "American way of life" with "Christian liberty" are just as culpable as Catholics who speak complacently of the modern political struggle as a contest between "Christ and anti-Christ."

Nevertheless Marxism, in its socialist as well as its communist version, deserves the most searching criticism. The strictures against communism are too obvious to require elucidation. It is more important to call attention to the fact that democratic socialism is still weighted down with ideological baggage, which prevents it from becoming a truly creative third force. It rightly recognizes the reality of a class struggle in contrast to sentimental bourgeois concepts of a pre-established harmony in society. But the class forces in modern society are much more complex than Marxism understood. A democratic political strategy

requires an understanding of these complexities. Democratic socialism rightly believes in the right and necessity of socializing property. But this strategy of justice still bears a halo of redemption in socialist thought which makes it difficult for socialist parties to deal pragmatically with the institution of property. Democratic socialism rightly believes in the dignity and the freedom of the individual; but its materialistic conception of human nature furnishes no spiritual foundation for this belief. It has taken this belief over, partly from Christianity and partly from a liberal culture, without furnishing an adequate framework for it in its own structures of thought.

Finally democratic socialism has never revised its theory of human nature. It still holds to the Marxist belief that human egotism is caused by a social institution and would therefore be eliminated by getting rid of that institution. This belief furnishes no basis for the kind of pragmatic politics in which a democratic socialism must engage. Such politics must be ready to use, beguile, suppress, sublimate, and guard against individual and collective human egotism on every level of social reconstruction.

If these various weaknesses of democratic socialism were to be overcome, all the religious overtones in the socialist program would disappear and the socialization of property would become merely one of many strategies which a modern technical society requires for the achievement of justice. It would furthermore have to be recognized that if this strategy were carried out with absolute consistency, it would create too great a combination of economic and political power in society. Socialism, as such, is, in short, neither an adequate religious belief nor a sufficient political program to solve the problems of justice and to sustain the desire for justice in modern society.

The desire for justice requires a deeper religious foundation than socialism as a creed has given it; and the instruments of justice must be more various than pure socialism as a strategy can develop. If

these conclusions are correct it follows that the "radical" or "left" forces in the Christian community, whether Catholic or Protestant, have a tremendous responsibility. They must not cease from the critical judgments which they have made of Christian conservatism and Christian individualism. But their judgments must be freer of Marxist illusions than they have been in the past. "Christian socialism" is no longer a viable compound. It will certainly not resolve the remaining tension between the Christian and the socialist elements among the political forces which now maintain a democratic society. Both of these elements must be subjected to a more rigorous criticism than has been furnished by Christian socialism. A capitalistic society must be criticized for its illusions, pretensions, and injustices without the use of Marxist illusions as the instruments of criticism. A socialist ideology must be criticized without the use of bourgeois individualism and sentimentality as the basis of criticism. Both forms of criticism must be, in short, more thoroughly Christian.

Communism and Christianity in Asia

It has long been evident to participants in ecumenical gatherings that the Christians of Asia, of whom very few are communists, have a much more tolerant attitude toward communism than Europeans. At both the Oslo youth conference in 1947 and the World Council meeting in Amsterdam in 1948 the Asiatic and African delegates were inclined to regard communism as much nearer to Christianity than capitalism. Recent reports from Japan, where the communist party has had a remarkable growth despite, or perhaps because of, our occupation, reveal that radically minded Christians are unwilling to define their position in terms which would exclude communists from their fellowship. Dr. Chao, the Chinese vice-president of the World Council of Churches, has been quite optimistic in recent utterances about the possibilities of achieving a working accord between communism and Christianity in China.

This attitude of Christians in Asia is, in one sense, merely a reflection of a general mood and attitude in the whole of the continent. Asia may not become communist; but it certainly does not have the resistance toward communism which characterizes European civilization from right to left. There are many reasons for this, of which a few may be enumerated. (1) Asia (and Africa as well) resents the arrogance of a white culture. Russia is not Asiatic, but it has succeeded in dramatizing itself as the champion of "colonial peoples" against white imperialism. Recent history in Indonesia for instance has furnished much grist for the Soviet propaganda mills. The rigorous inter-racial policy of communist youth organizations in Asia makes a strong appeal to the student groups in India and China.

(2) The agrarian poverty of Asia is more desperate than the poverty of industrial Europe. Logically communism is a creed for the industrial rather than the agrarian poor. But the industrial poor of Europe are armed with a socialist creed to withstand communist totalitarianism. European socialism is, or has become, ideologically weak. But it does have a fierce devotion to democratic liberties which is constantly fanned into new flames by its actual experience with communist political chicanery. Asiatic political life, on the contrary, has neither a well developed democratic-socialist middle ground nor any considerable experience with communist politics. Communism therefore appeals to it as the only possible alternative to a corrupt feudalism. In Japan, where a socialist movement was developing, the political ineptness and the lack of moral rigor in the socialist movement has given a new impetus to the communist cause.

(3) Our own country, which fancies itself a beacon light of democracy to the whole world, is not a particularly persuasive argument against communism, as far as Asia is concerned. Even if we were as virtuous as we imagine ourselves to be, our power is too great and our standards of living too high to impress the Orient. We are "ma-

terialistic." We may suspect that envy of our good fortune partly prompts this attitude toward us; but that does not change the fact that we are not admired or loved in the Orient. We are Dives in the imagination of the Asiatic Lazarus; and our philanthropies are in his estimation only the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table, as indeed they are.

(4) Asia is almost completely uninterested in the political history of Europe in the post-war years and has only the slightest comprehension of the moral and spiritual motives which prompted the fierce European resistance to communism. It regards most of the criticisms of communist totalitarianism, made by Europeans, as reactionary propaganda. It is uncritical on this point not only because it has had little experience with communist terror and chicanery but also because the traditions of freedom which inform the life of European society are not a part of the Asiatic inheritance.

(5) Finally, poverty stricken peoples in China and India find the utopian vision of an ideal justice a too pleasant anodyne for their miseries to be willing to entertain the tragic fact that a utopian dream may turn into a horrible nightmare.

These various reasons for the greater receptivity toward communism in Asia than in Europe do not prove the inevitability of a communist triumph in Asia. But they must prepare us for a different strategy in resisting communism in Asia on both the political and the religious level.

In Future Issues

Among the articles scheduled for publication in future issues are the following: a symposium on the sources of social evil, by Alexander Miller and Roger L. Shinn; a Protestant interpretation of sex, by Robert Bonthius; a discussion of Martin Buber's social philosophy, by Paul Pfuetze. Book reviews for early publication include M. M. Bober's *Karl Marx's Interpretation of History*, Henry Knox Sherrill's *The Church's Ministry in Our Time*, Jean-Paul Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew*, Robert H. Bonthius' *Christian Paths to Self-Acceptance*, Frank S. Loescher's *The Protestant Church and the Negro*, Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, etc.

A special issue has been planned for next winter, to be devoted to an appraisal of existentialism in philosophy and theology. Several unusual articles and reviews of recent existentialist books are scheduled.

THE EAST HARLEM PROTESTANT PARISH

By J. ARCHIE HARGRAVES

[At the request of the Editorial Board, this article has been prepared by one of the pastors of the East Harlem Protestant Parish. The Frontier Fellowship voted, at its spring conference, to attempt to raise \$500 during the forthcoming year for the support of this unique project.—The Editors.]

Just east of swanky Fifth Avenue and running north from 96th Street to 116th Street in New York's Manhattan is one of the most depressing city slum areas in the United States. The area is known as East Harlem. It is depressing for many reasons: fire-traps with dirty and dimly-lit stairways as well as dark and dismal apartments; excessive over-crowding with as many as three or four families in one three-room apartment and four thousand people to one block; empty lots heaped with refuse and garbage in which rats and vermin play openly; filthy streets in which hordes of children play a local game known as stick ball, while they dodge the piles of refuse and speeding automobiles; air mail garbage which is expressed down into the streets or vacant lots from windows above.

Absentee landlords entrust the operation and maintenance of their property to agents who tyrannize their tenants or take advantage of their ignorance. Property is in general disrepair; it takes more than a year to get a hole in the ceiling repaired, three months for a broken window; painting is seldom done; plumbing fixtures are repaired only upon order of the Health Department.

In broken families the real father's place is usurped by "that man living with mother." Or mother tries to go it alone, takes a job, and is unable to give supervision to the coming and going of her numerous children. Even homes that are not broken lack any common core around

which the family can rally and realize its unity; there is not even a common meal, since no one family member eats at the same time as another.

All of these factors contribute toward making East Harlem the area of blight that it is. In such a depressing context of society, it is little wonder that crime, juvenile delinquency, and communism, coupled with defeatism, escapism, and other-worldliness, flourish luxuriantly.

Nor is the picture yet complete. Most of the people belong to the marginal, low-wage group of unskilled workers who are the last to be hired and the first to be fired. At this writing, they are already feeling the tight pinch of unemployment, which is working severe hardship due to the prevailing high cost of living.

Again, East Harlem, serving as a point of entry for immigrants and migrants, is a meeting place of all races and has a long history of racial conflicts. The ethnic group in the majority always has resented the new wave of immigrants. From its point of view these were "inferior peoples" moving in. The Germans resented the Jews. The Jews resented the Irish and Italians. The Irish and Italians resented the Greeks. The Italians in turn resented the West Indian Negroes. The West Indian Negroes resented the southern Negroes. All groups resent to a varying degree the great influx of Puerto-Ricans which is rapidly filling the area.

The Negroes now in the area are for the most part recent migrants from the south who regard it as a starting point for Harlem, farther uptown. Negroes and Puerto-Ricans constitute a majority with large pockets of Italians, and a small group of Irish, Jewish, and German families in between.

It was this area of blight which challenged a group of young men in the 1948 graduating class of Union Theological Seminary. They were veterans, serious in their conception of the ministry. They did not want an easy job; they desired to tackle something difficult, something which constituted a challenge into which muscle, brain, and sweat had to be put before success could be achieved.

The young ministers were aware of the socio-economic plight of East Harlem. They knew that successive waves of migration and the culture contact resulting therefrom had precipitated secular modes of thought, broken down social control, and dissolved traditional restraints. All this they expected. But they did not know until after careful investigation that Protestantism had retreated from this area and left little to fill the gap with the exception of a church here and there catering exclusively to people who had long since moved out of the area. The Protestant Church simply was not there. The lowest level income group (the majority in the area) was not receiving the Gospel except through the medium of storefront churches of the Pentecostal type, and these churches were only scratching the surface in proportion to the seething mass of humanity living in the area. While they provided a closely-knit fellowship and an outlet for pent-up emotions, the emphasis was "other-worldly," and afforded an escape rather than a coming to grips with the tremendous problems of daily life arising out of the situation peculiar to East Harlem.

Nor was the area adequately covered by the Roman Catholic Church. The Puerto-Ricans, nominally Catholic, were drifting either toward the Pentecostal-sect type of religion or toward a secular view of life.

The group of young men went to four denominational home-mission boards, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian, and enlisted their support in an inter-racial, interdenominational venture. Since that time, additional funds have been forthcoming from other interested groups and individuals.

When the men went into the area, beginning last summer with a daily vacation Bible school on 100th Street between First and Second Avenues (a block with over 4,000 people), it was with the presupposition that a united Protestant strategy is needed for the whole area. Therefore, a group ministry in which several ministers cooperated as part of a larger-parish system in approaching the needs of the community in terms of Gospel, philosophy, and action was of the greatest importance. It was felt that most often blighted areas are approached from the standpoint of individual ministerial effort, and that a minister working alone is opposed by such highly-disciplined forces as well as by such general apathy that he soon falls prey to deadening influences and loses his effectiveness.

Since the blocks in East Harlem are usually self-contained, in that nearly all the cultural and socio-economic needs are met within them, the ministry to the area was conceived in terms of this self-contained neighborhood. For this reason, the storefront church was chosen as the most effective channel through which the Christian Gospel might be uttered and received. Again, it was thought that the disinherited peoples who are constantly kicked around by the agencies of society might find a real barrier to communication with a minister if they had to enter an imposing stone edifice, walk down a long well-carpeted corridor, and pass a barrage of secretaries. The mere fact that in a storefront the minister is near a plate-glass window where all can see that he is there would appear to speed up the desires of those who need it most to come in and seek help.

The first store-front church was opened in October of last year in a 22' by 22' room on 102nd Street between Second and Third Avenues. For the most part the staff, composed of three graduate ministers and eight seminary students, and the children of the block were responsible for its renovation. As result the children began to take pride in the church which they had helped build, and signed up immediately for all activities.

The controlling conception in the work with children was that if anything significant was to be done with them, it had to be accomplished through a total program in which each group would meet at least twice during the week and on Sunday. Those who signed up for one aspect of the program had to sign up for the total program. By and large, unusual success has been achieved with the program for children, both in the initial church, and the second church on 100th Street which was organized in December of last year. In one week, a total participation of over 700 children in the activities of both churches was recorded.

Moreover, the work with children has been gratifying beyond the superficial level of mere statistics. Most of the children had no previous experience in group life, lacked even a simple religious background excepting casual contacts with Catholic sacerdotalism and Pentecostal emotionalism, and possessed little spiritually-meaningful family life. The Parish conceived its task as that of filling this void by providing such group life through recreational facilities and leadership, religious education, a meaningful worship experience, a place to congregate, and, above all, by giving the children just plain friendship at all hours possible.

At first, access to the parents was through the children. The parents of each child were visited each week and in time they began to open up and tell of the tremendous pressures working upon them and their children. There was the boy who stole his grandmother's rent money. He was taken into the country by one of the Parish ministers, treated with confidence for the first time in his life, counseled. As a result, he joined in the Parish activities. There was the fifteen year-old girl who ran away from home for five days. She had become discontented with both home and school mainly because of the lack of a sufficient outlet for her energies. Around her a unique interracial high school group was formed. There was an older girl who was graduated recently from high school and who had no real friends of either sex. She was encouraged to work creatively and in

wholesome fellowship with other young people her age. There were countless parents who did not give counsel, affection, and direction to their children—they only provided them with the physical needs of life and thought that their responsibilities ended there. The new dynamic of the Parish in their midst soon led them to perceive that family responsibilities are as much spiritual as physical if emotional stability is to develop in the children.

The strong ties developed with parents based on what was happening to the children were strengthened further as the Parish conceived a plan for interesting more adults in its program. Although the two churches were made as accessible as possible, the idea came of taking the church into the over-crowded apartment houses and holding services there. The form which immediately came to mind was that of the "Agape" meal or love-feast of primitive Christianity. Groups were organized as apartment house units for purposes of worship, action on common problems peculiar to the house situation as well as broader community problems, and as a future feeder for a sincere, devoted, and disciplined church membership.

The group meetings in each apartment house rotated from family to family with a small lunch being served over which thanks was given to God for the privilege of uniting in prayer, meditation, worship, fellowship, and community action. The method of organization was this: systematic calling upon all the occupants of the house, stressing the desire and pleasure of knowing them more intimately; and the spontaneous invitation by one family to all the others to come to a common meeting in their home where a meal was served. The people were told why the Parish had come to their neighborhood and the role which they could play in making it a center of dedication to God, a fount from which God's word would emerge, and a medium through which His Word would be translated relevantly in terms of the East Harlem situation. To make sure that the religious reference was foremost, liturgical worship was

practiced, all elements included: prayer, hymn singing, Scripture reading, and a sermon. Discussion was encouraged on ways and means whereby a religious group organized on the apartment house basis could change the "face" of the area. Further discussion was held on the need and desire for such a group to commit itself to the Kingdom of Christ by organizing into a permanent religious group, vowing to receive religious instruction as well as to constitute a cell for Christian action.

As the process of working with several of these groups proceeded, the Parish was amazed at the dynamic inherent in such media. Real religious conversion resulted. Every one came away with the conviction that a real religious revival was in process. Unlike traditional revivals, the use of Scripture, prayer, and preaching was directed toward meeting concrete spiritual problems raised by the people themselves. A deliberate attempt was made to link personal evangelistic appeals with a particular thing the group or individual could do in the community, and definite religious commitment was made to perform such action.

To give content to the new religious experiences, a careful plan of instruction in the validities of Christian faith was followed. Each religious problem (as well as community ones) was followed through in the light of such teaching. The aim of the respective groups was the imposition of discipline upon themselves in all matters, so that by a certain time they would reach a stage in which their members would commit themselves to a total religious program designed to sanctify the secular expressions of their daily life. Interestingly, many saw that such sanctification might set them apart from the community as a self-righteous hallowed group. To offset this, they sought to strengthen their roots in the community by organizing similar groups, and at the same time, sought to develop a more intensive meditative life among themselves.

The other thing which amazed the Parish as these several love-feast groups continued was the quality of the intimate relation-

ships achieved by these people. And in these groups were men and women who could not be reached by church activity in the usual sense. The fact that the meeting was in the building in which they lived and that the fellowship resulting therefrom was so intense and simple, motivated many, who would be adverse to do so in the larger traditional church group, to come and share common experiences and problems. They were people who lacked rootage, who were cut off from the normal development of a larger fellowship, who were suspicious of so-called "religion." Many had not set foot inside a church since the early 1930's, or at least since being in New York. They indicted the typical city church for its obvious lack of friendliness and closely-knit brotherhood.

In all the houses in which love-feast groups were organized, the occupants developed intimate relationships with one another. This came as result of their planning and carrying through common ventures together: cleaning a lot so that children might have a decent place to play; raising funds so that children might get a few weeks at camp during the summer; working for better garbage disposal; fighting for decent housing and struggling to renovate the homes they already had; calling upon others in the interest of evangelism; worshiping—doing things together with mind, heart, and body in such a way as to create a common loyalty which in most instances takes years to develop in traditional groups of any kind.

The love-feasts have been supplemented by personal counseling on the part of the Parish ministers. Many of the families are unemployed and constitute the really dispossessed persons of our society. Those working are unskilled laborers who are at the bottom of the economic ladder. They must be worked with each day; in fact, the problems of a single person may exhaust eight hours or more of counseling time a week. Such factors have made for an intensely personal ministry in which real problems are reached in a way not typical of the normal church. For the first time,

people have a sense of not being kicked around and frustrated, have the feeling that they are real personalities, citizens of a community with definite privileges and responsibilities, and children of God whose problems can be met by the church which is the fellowship most representative of His spirit on earth.

Experience with the area through all media utilized by the Parish and the resultant intimate knowledge of its people has proved that this is a new world—a foreign country. New methods of approach had to be conceived. The old standards of preaching and worship were of little avail. The ministers at first did not speak the same language as the people. There was no common store of religious tradition to which appeal could be made. The idea of the church as a beautiful sanctuary to which one retired on Sunday in order to get away from the hurly-burly cares of the world cut no ice. Neither could a common medium of contact be set up on the ground of exhortation to live a more moral personal life. The ministers of the Parish became convinced that the personal approach is the most effective at this time. Concern about personal problems is of first importance—why the people do not get enough to eat, why houses are kept by owners in a constant state of disrepair, why children in the same family have as many different fathers as there are children, what people are to do when their backs are against the wall and there is no money. This personal approach is aimed at bringing a religious center into the personalities of the people, both as individuals and as groups, in such manner that they can learn to draw upon Christianity as a reservoir when pressing problems arise. The people of this community must be given a sense of rootage, a sense of belonging, in a world which they think is hostile to them. The real meaning of the Gospel must penetrate their existence, showing them that they are children of God with real personalities in His sight, and that if they commit themselves to His grace as externalized in a definite Christian fellowship, they will have a reservoir on which to draw in order to solve the most perplexing problems, as well

as strength to take upon their shoulders the problems of people who have not yet been reached by such a fellowship.

Out of this meeting of basic human needs and the subsequent uncovering of deeper spiritual needs, several members of the groups have bound themselves into a more definitely committed Christian fellowship, and now constitute the membership of the 102nd Street Church. The basis of this fellowship is a covenant signed by all which expresses the following: (1) acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour; (2) the setting aside of a brief period of time each week for counseling with the minister; (3) joining together for specific community action, only withdrawing from such action if it is against individual conscience and then not publicly opposing it; (4) financial support of the Parish; (5) imposition of personal religious discipline—pledging to take out some time each day for contemplation, meditation, and prayer.

As time has passed, the tempo of intense personal and community problems has increased. People who are about to be dispossessed of their homes come to seek advice and help. Others come who are sick and uncared for by the impersonal health facilities of the city. As they come in connection with these material problems, a wedge is driven into their personalities, and deeper spiritual problems are brought out from behind their materialistic masks. More than anything else, the staggering load of problems under which the average person in the community lives has revealed the inadequacy of men whose first duty is preaching the Gospel to deal with all of them. Yet those technically equipped to do a better job often lose themselves in the welter of institutionalism and fail to satisfy the craving of these people to be treated as persons and not as mere cases. Perhaps the real answer lies in attaching to the Parish technically competent personnel, e.g. missionary doctors and lawyers who have a real sense of Christian vocation, and who are prepared to aid in the extension of the Gospel, as it affects all spheres of human existence, to this blighted area.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND THE PLANNED SOCIETY

By PAUL ABRECHT

The controversy between the advocates of a planned economy and supporters of the free enterprise system has been carried on with such violence and heat in the last few years that the finer points of the debate have been lost among the extreme arguments on both sides. Meanwhile the economic and political developments of the war and the post-war periods have greatly undermined the validity of the stock arguments. The purpose of this article is to summarize some conclusions of the debate over planning and to set forth their significance for Christian ethics.

I.

The debate between those who insisted that any interference with natural economic laws would end in chaos or dictatorship and those who argued that all the evils of a capitalist society would disappear in a completely planned economy has proved sterile and unrealistic. An enterprise system is not as much ruled by the harmonies of the natural order as the first group assumed, and the planners have had to discover that planning is no panacea for all our economic ills. The experience with economic planning since the Great Depression has tended to refute the old arguments of both its opponents and supporters. Economic catastrophe has not followed from the first efforts of the national community to plan for full employment. Nor have the extreme claims that the technique of planning is a simple strategy to be used in directing a free society been realized.

The introduction of political pressures into the realm of every day economic decisions, as the experience with OPA and other war planning measures has shown, furthered the cause of economic justice but also raised many new problems. Most planners believed that when the private inter-

ests of a capitalist economic order were brought under rational economic control the last obstacles to a just economic system would be overcome; and most planning theory assumed that rational economic planning would not be realized without substantial socialization or nationalization of private property, particularly the means of production.

The prevalence of this kind of thinking helps to explain why the experiments in central planning of the Soviet Union could for so long be regarded as the model for other countries. Very little attention was paid to the problem of freedom, it being assumed that the majority would be in such agreement that drastic physical controls would not be necessary. Liberals were unwilling to face the fact that the success of Soviet experiments, like those of the Nazis, depended upon physical controls to a degree repugnant to any sincere democrat. Today it is generally agreed that this kind of planning is incompatible with a free political life as we know it and would be a bad solution to the problems of our society.

II.

It is also clear that the productivity of an enterprise system contrasts favorably with a rigidly planned economy. There is general recognition now that the best case for planning is one in which its limits are clearly recognized. There is a new appreciation that the mechanism of modern industrial society is too vast and complicated to be brought under the detailed and direct controls of a planning authority without considerable loss in efficiency, incentive, and productivity. Mr. David Lilienthal, one of the chief advocates of greater planning, in the fall of 1947, said:

"A highly interdependent country (like the U. S.) capable of producing more than \$150 billions worth of goods a year, is too complex for rigid planning and the enforcement of detailed plans by law. . . . We must function in a loose, informal way under sanctions that are largely ethical and moral, based upon commonly accepted standards of fair play and respect for human integrity. That is the way we do function by and large and that is why we flourish."

(N. Y. Times, Oct. 22, 1947.)

More recently Miss Barbara Ward, summing up the experience with planning in Britain, concludes that in a free society, it is as important to observe the limits of planning as to promote the idea itself. (*Foreign Affairs*, Jan., 1949.)

The approach of most planners today is well stated by Professor J. E. Meade of the University of London in the preface to his little book, *Planning and the Price Mechanism*:

" . . . a large measure of state foresight and intervention is required to guide the economy from war to peace, to prevent inflationary and deflationary pressures, to ensure a tolerably equitable distribution of income and property and to prevent or to control the anti-social rigging of the market by private interests, but . . . these objectives can be achieved in an efficient and a free society only if an extensive use is made of the mechanisms of competition, free enterprise and the free market determination of prices and output."

The decline of socialism as a political and economic philosophy,¹ the fear of regimentation, and the new appreciation of the productivity of a free society explain in part at least the desire to put the case for planning on sounder ethical and theoretical grounds.

III.

The issue of planning and the nature of that planning is being worked out not so

¹ The ethical and the social concern expressed in socialism is now more or less taken for granted while its economic and political theory is unable to deal with the realities of our situation.

much in terms of certain doctrinaire economic ideas as in terms of the practical day to day needs of the economic system within a democratic political framework. The society has moved by necessity to accept a kind of planning which represents an economic development fully as revolutionary as any that has taken place in this century. Through the compulsion of events we are already practicing a kind of direction and control of economic life, the significance of which can hardly be exaggerated.

There has come to be a general consensus in the community that at least four major responsibilities compel the state to intervene in a new and drastic way in the economic order. None of these objectives can be achieved unless there is considerable central direction of the use of our total economic effort.

(1) *The national defense.* More than ever before in the history of nations the need for the state to plan for the national security is clear. The nation must conserve and stockpile materials which are necessary for military strength. It must promote the development of industries essential to military defense. The extent of our military needs is so great that it is impossible to treat them as though they could be met by recourse to the market system, as one buys an automobile or a suit of clothes. There must be planning to guarantee that the necessary military weapons can be obtained and in a manner which will least disturb the working of our existing enterprise system.

(2) *Internal economic stability.* Perhaps most important of all, the community demands that the waste and loss of national income through depression and unemployment be stopped. There would be very little disagreement with the view that the state must assume responsibility for booms and slumps. But the worst effects of the business cycle can be avoided only through purposive action by the government. The need to maintain the stability of our economic life is a legitimate objective of government economic planning.

(It may be granted that business fluctuations will continue in an economy any less regimented than the Russian, but this is hardly an adequate reason why measures should not be taken to anticipate these crises as far as humanly possible and to minimize the hardships they bring.)

(3) *The social security of the nation.* The program of welfare and social security of the modern state necessitates some kind of planning. The withdrawal of money through the social security taxes in 1937, when the social security program was relatively small, had a grave deflationary effect on the recovery program of the New Deal. The expansion of welfare services to include not only unemployment and old age insurance, but housing, medical aid, and a guaranteed annual wage only reinforces the argument for planning. It is generally recognized that the overall effect of these services on the national economic welfare is one of the factors which makes planning necessary.

(4) *External economic relations.* Since the beginning of the Marshall Plan this reason has a new relevance for our own country and it is perhaps the most compelling reason for planning in Great Britain. Any country with a significant amount of foreign trade must take steps to secure an export-import balance at a level which will keep the economy solvent and preserve the standard of living. According to one reliable estimate, the United Kingdom alone must increase the volume of export trade 75% over pre-war amounts if the current standard of living is to be maintained. And this must be done steadily over the indefinite future.

Taken together these arguments seem to demand some minimal amount of government planning. They lead to the conclusion that the government must be as responsible ultimately for the way in which the goods of the national community are allocated as the controller of any lesser economic unit in society is responsible for the use of the resources under his direction. As Sir Oliver Franks has pointed out, "It

is nonsense to praise the planning and control of the housewife and the board of directors and condemn *a priori* similar activities by the state." (*Central Planning and Control in War and Peace*, p. 26).

The fact is that the continuation of our democratic institutions depends in some measure upon the realization of all or most of the objectives stated above. We cannot continue to suppose, in contradiction to the experience of the last two decades, that the initiative of the individual enterpriser and the working of an uncontrolled automatic market economy will be able to realize them. In the final analysis the argument for planning is based on the feeling that a competitive economic system cannot be trusted to promote automatically the welfare of society. Charles H. Cooley pointed out a good many years ago that the market is more than a mechanism which operates neutrally in the recording and satisfaction of economic wants. It has a bias all its own and gradually comes to reflect the values which are uppermost in the minds of those who come to control its operation. Very few of the factors which are concerned with the growth and development of men and of society can be allowed to be controlled solely by the pecuniary valuations of the market place. (*Social Process*, pp. 315-16.)

This is certainly the first point which Christians concerned with the problems of society need to emphasize. There is agreement today among all those who regard the problem at all dispassionately that the need for planning cannot be decided one way or another according to the general political view of this or that person or party. From the standpoint of Christian ethics there ought to be little disagreement that some degree of planning is now inevitable and necessary. But it is at this point that the greatest missionary work has to be done. The success of our efforts to build a stable social order will depend to a great extent on whether or not business and the middle classes understand the need for change; and the efforts to convert conservatives will be more effective if we speak in terms of the practical problems of keeping society

liable rather than in terms of abstractions which raise the specter of heretical and unworkable economic solutions or the possibility of fanatical political leadership.

IV.

It may be helpful therefore to outline the theory underlying the approach to planning today and to show how this has been implemented in a practical program.

The theory of planning most accepted today is based largely on the economic analysis of the late Lord Keynes. He challenged the assumptions of the classical economists that a competitive economy would never experience unemployment and prolonged depression. He argued that there was only an indirect relation between the propensity to save and the willingness to invest. He maintained that the fluctuations of the national income were due primarily to failure to hold to that level of new investment, which, together with the expenditures of the consumers, constituted the income of the economy. Keynes thus formulated a theory which, as he said, led to the conclusion that the chief difficulties in maintaining full employment would be overcome not by socialization but by limited and delicate manipulation of the taxing and spending powers of the government. Thus he argued that with a minimum of central control "the aggregate volume of output corresponding to full employment, as nearly as practicable" might be established, but from that point on the play of private self-interest ought not to be interfered with. He agreed that the extension of the functions of government required to achieve this goal would appear to the American businessman as a frightful encroachment upon individual right, but he defended it "as the only practicable means of avoiding the destruction of existing economic forms in their entirety and as the condition of the successful functioning of individual initiative". (*General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, p. 380). Keynes believed that the right analysis of the problem would "cure the disease whilst preserving efficiency and freedom."

From this and other investigations of the problem of full employment (especially that of Sir William Beveridge) the theoretical basis was laid for a kind of central planning which would make almost exclusive use of financial and fiscal controls. The main objective is to maintain the stability of the economy by insuring that the national income is kept at a stable level or allowed to rise at a rate which permits steady economic progress. Through the use of the refined methods of statistical research fairly accurate periodic summaries of the national income position can now be obtained and a corrective policy can be initiated to offset losses leading to slumps or excessive gains leading to booms.

The chief instrument to guide this type of planning is the National Budget. Both in England and America, as well as in other countries where economic planning has been initiated, this device has become the foundation of policy making. (The first report of the Economic Advisers to the President contains an excellent description of this device.)

The purpose of the budget is to show "the distribution of income and expenditure among consumers, business, and government, and imports and exports." By studying the relative as well as the absolute amounts which the economy is expending for any of these four functions and by comparing budgets for different periods it is possible to note any unfavorable trends. By means of this device the Economic Advisers to the President have helped to provide the basis for those economic policy steps which the President is required to take under the Employment Act of 1947. This act authorizes him to create and maintain "conditions under which there will be afforded useful employment opportunities, including self-employment . . . and to promote maximum employment, production, and purchasing power." The program of central financial direction and control is coupled with other policies designed to influence the price mechanism as has been practiced already in this country on a

comprehensive scale not only for farmers but industrial groups as well.

It may be argued with some force that such a conception of planning involves no radical departure from principles or programs already approved by the community. But planning even in this limited sense does constitute a sharp break with the traditional conception of the function of government. It involves more than a mere extension of historic practices of government intervention in the economic order. The government has indeed assumed a power and authority which were formerly relegated to the autonomous forces of the competitive market system. Sir Oliver Franks, who supports this limited view of planning, holds nevertheless that it would be an error to misunderstand the revolutionary implications of the new functions of government which even this type of planning entails. It means "a radical redefinition of the function of Government in the economic field . . . asserting its job to be the shaping of situations before they arise. In short, it has gone into business management and become general manager of the national economy" (*Central Planning and Control in War and Peace*, p. 35).

The "revolution" of planning consists in the fact that the price mechanism is being replaced as the *final* guide and arbiter to our economic welfare. The price mechanism in the enterprise system is not destroyed but its decisions and the results of its operations are no longer regarded as final and inviolable. It can still perform certain functions better than any planning body. If any freedom of economic movement is to be maintained, a market structure is inevitable, and the appeal to produce, to distribute, to spend, etc., must still be largely in terms of economic self-interest and financial incentive. But the results of these individual, free, and independent actions will now be subject to final review.

V.

The kind of planning outlined above aims to avoid excessive interference by gov-

ernment in the detailed operation of the economic system. Its justification is quite independent of the argument for socialization or nationalization of particular industries. Social ownership in one form or another may be necessary where monopoly or semi-monopoly power threatens the public interest. But the issue of planning is larger than the question of nationalization. The fundamental issue is whether the economic system is to be the ruler or the servant of the people who are dependent upon it for their economic welfare. The "happy coincidence between private and social advantage" which the free market system was supposed to promote cannot be assumed and we would be foolish indeed, in the light of the evidence, to allow our economic fate to be determined by the chance working of a mechanism which is clearly subject to breakdowns and also to rigging by forces inside and outside the economy.

In view of these facts, there must be continual experimenting with economic plans to make the economic system more responsive to the needs of the whole community. Christian love and justice demand such experimenting. At the same time the problem of freedom demands grave consideration of the dangers involved in giving authority to any group however much it may claim to represent the will of the majority. Any attempt to order the affairs of men within a democratic society must proceed by agreement and understanding. Unnecessary restrictions on the private enterprise system may only serve to reduce its efficiency and the ultimate social benefits. Therefore this experimenting will surely be more fruitful if it is undertaken not in order to prove some rigidly preconceived views of the shape of the good society but as an attempt to deal with the realities of economic life. It would seem that the pragmatic approach to the problem of planning conforms to the Christian responsibility for social order as that was defined at Amsterdam: "to seek new and creative solutions which never allow either justice or freedom to destroy the other."

A Short Bibliography

Critical books:

Besides Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* (University of Chicago Press), the more recent book by John ewkes, *Ordeal by Planning* (Macmillan), ought to be consulted. It contains some careful study of the experiments with planning in Britain since the war, though it suffers from an extreme polemical approach to the issues.

Books favorable to planning:

(1) Sir William Beveridge, *Full Employment in Free Society* (Norton). This book must be read in light of certain criticisms of Beveridge's conclusions; nevertheless it is a pioneering work. The introductory summary is written for the layman and sets forth the main points of his scheme.

(2) Sir Oliver Franks, *Central Planning and Control in Peace and War* (Longman, Green: London). This little pamphlet summarizes the argument for planning in a very balanced style and is based on the experience of Sir Oliver as one of Britain's top war-time planners.

(3) E. Lipson, *A Planned Economy or Free Enterprise* (A. & C. Black: London). This book shows that the emphasis on planning for the economic order is not new and is quite consistent with capi-

talism. Professor Lipson, as one of the great contemporary economic historians, is well qualified to discuss the evolution toward a planned society.

(4) J. E. Meade, *Planning and the Price Mechanism* (G. Allen & Unwin: London). In this book the author develops what he calls the "Liberal-Socialist Solution" to the issue of planning vs. free enterprise. The preface is helpful but the layman will find much of the book too technical.

(5) Miss Barbara Ward's writings ought to be mentioned here. She is a devout Catholic and one of the editors of the *Economist*, an outstanding British weekly of comment on economic and political issues, liberal conservative in its view. The chapters on the American economy in Miss Ward's book, *The West at Bay* (Norton) and her article in *Foreign Affairs*, (Jan., 1949, "The Limits of Planning") are excellent reading.

(6) *The Economic Reports of the President* (Harcourt) contain invaluable information compiled by the president's economic advisers and presented semi-annually in the economic message of the president.

(7) John M. Clark, *Alternative to Serfdom* (A. A. Knopf). Lectures by one of America's foremost economists on problems of economic policy.

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IMPERIALISM

By EDUARD HEIMANN

I.

The interglobal conferences of the last years, ecclesiastical and other, astounded and appalled white members by the unbounded optimism of the representatives of the colored races on the future of the colored world once its emancipation from white rule would be accomplished.

A general reason naturally is the distortion of perspective brought about by a spectacular ill and the expectation of its early removal. But there is a more specific reason on which those hopes are invariably founded; that is the prospect of at last industrializing the countries kept almost unindustrial by the white lords. Poverty-stricken and disease-ridden as these countries are, they expect to rise to the standards of living and health attained in the industrial countries and are supremely unmindful of the unsolved problem of industrial life. Nay, the very warning of these problems now lying ahead of them makes them impatient or even suspicious of a stratagem which might be designed to deter them from breaking the white monopoly on industry.

This state of affairs confronts us with baffling questions too long obscured for the western eye by a kind of provincialism, the reverse of the distortion of perspective in the colored world by white rule. Among social scientists, apart from the lonely pioneer Hobson, the Marxists are the only ones to have given systematic study to the economics and sociology of imperialism (the original idea coming, however, not from Marx but from Rodbertus, whom Marx reviled no end and whose astounding predictions on imperialism Marxists have long incorporated in their system). But even Marxists are hard put to it in the face of the imperialist reality. For capitalist imperialism within any economic interpretation of history is, naturally, assumed to be an elongation of the familiar lines of capi-

talist exploitation into foreign countries by means of political power. Now the economic mechanism of capitalist exploitation is in industrial employment—but it is precisely the absence of industrial employment (and exploitation) which forms the principal grievance of the victims of imperialism.

Capitalist imperialism, i.e. imperialism motivated by the search of private profit, would use two ways to spread its business method: its competitive superiority in the open market and political and military force to monopolize that market. The objectives can be classified under three headings. (1) To preempt at cheap prices colonial materials for industrial use at home; (2) to find outlets in the colonies for industrial capacities not usable in a home market which is kept short by monopoly and periodically narrowing down in business depressions; and (3) to find outlets in the colonies for capitals not investable in such monopolized and crisis-threatened home markets. In their competition in the world market the various national capitalisms naturally resort to the use of political power to monopolize those opportunities.

In the list of three objectives, the first and second are short-run measures designed to alleviate the stress of a given situation, while the third is a rather long-range consideration of a different type, and possibly in conflict with the first two. Domestic investments abroad certainly increase competition abroad for both raw materials and sales of outputs. On the other hand, capitalism being a dynamic and expansive movement, it is precisely the long run outlet for newly formed capitals, the prospect of new hunting grounds and new kingdoms, which are essential to the life of capitalism, if it is not to choke. The third objective, in other words is the industrialization of colonial countries by metropolitan capital and for its profit.

In socialist terminology this is imperialist exploitation, elongating into foreign countries the time-honored procedure of using cheap machine products to underbid and ruin traditional crafts and trades and transform their former independent workers into industrial proletarians. While the applicability of the terminology of exploitation is often doubtful where big profits accrue to the great discoverers and organizers, whose achievements benefit mankind at a multiple of the most fabulous profits, the strictly absentee character of metropolitan capital ownership in colonies is unmistakable; it is the capital, not the owner, which "makes" the profit. On the other hand, the fact that capital is attracted by high profits abroad in view of declining profits in a crowded home market is quite all right from any point of view if this is only the expression, in terms of business economics, of the fact that capital is short abroad and plentiful at home, as it certainly is; capital is then redistributed more evenly precisely by following the lure of higher profit to the exotic places where it is more urgently needed and can be more productive.

More generally, the achievement of capitalism is the enormous increase of productivity by rationalization and industrialization. The achievement was made possible by a regime of economic liberty—*laissez faire*—which permitted everyone to use his capital or land or labor to his own best advantage according to his own best judgment, without regard to the plight of others and to the balance of the whole economy, merely relying on the mechanism of market and price to produce equilibrium. The achievement of productivity is thus bought at the expense of economic disorder and social inequality—the rule of property over man. Economic liberty is the liberty of the strong to rule the weak. This seems to fit excellently into the pattern of imperialism: the rule of the industrial and financial magnates of the motherland over the backward defenseless millions of the colony by organizing them in industrial work. And as the colonial proletarians are in a different

country without democracy, the economic distance between capital and labor would here be decisively enlarged by the distance between the absentee political master and the native subjects, and the political weapon of democracy—political liberty—would not be available, as it is in the motherland, to alleviate the strain of economic liberty.

II.

But this picture, not too alluring anyway, does not represent all the facts of economic imperialism, as we have seen. Capitalism did its best to produce a proletarian existence, to be sure, where there had been skilled crafts and a primitive but assured food situation. Capitalism dumped its cheap factory products in the colonial markets—to do this is in the nature of capitalism, it follows from its superior productivity. In addition, as political subsidies and land grants are not unknown at home, so imperialism permits metropolitan capital to preempt the lands in the colonial country and thus to cut the natives off from their food supplies. The climax of economic ignominy was reached in the occasional cutting of bread trees. The purpose and effect of all this was to force the natives into capitalist employment at lowest pay, mainly in mines and other sources of raw materials for the industries of the motherland.

Anthropology in recent decades has made us understand the full weight of this tragedy beyond the external misery into which it threw the natives. Their skills and the strict organization of the use of the land used to be woven into the fabric of their community life. Now they were not only impoverished, but degraded, deprived of their humanity. The tragedy is no less shocking for the fact, pointed out by Karl Polanyi in his brilliant book, *The Great Transformation*, that it only repeated what in the beginning of the industrial revolution had been done to the British craftsmen and peasants. So far then there is complete parallelism.

The fundamental difference is in the fact that the degraded proletarians of the

mother countries were offered a new, however modest, chance by industrial employment, while this chance was blocked to the colonial proletarians. Why this was done is the unexplored problem. It is a problem because the withholding of industry from the colonies meant the forfeiting of profit chances. A profit can, in principle, be made only by production, not by non-production. According to the Marxian version of the socialist theory (which is not stringent), a profit can be made only by employing and exploiting profitless workers, not by leaving them idle. It would not be unrealistic, naturally, to argue that capitalism, through its inordinate greed, destroys its own profit chances; the entire Marxian system is designed to show that capitalism undermines its own existence and that, in this sense, it is irrational and doomed to go down at the hands of those who possess social rationality. But the repression of industrial development in the colonial countries is of a different character: it is not the unintended result of individual actions quite differently designed, but a deliberate line of action pursued over many generations. This may suggest the interpretation as a form of monopoly policy designed to protect the home industries from a foreign competition, which might even come from colonial affiliations of the home industries themselves; this would be similar to a monopolistic reduction of outputs in the home market, with a view to raising price and profit. But monopolistic restriction of output makes sense only as a means to increase profit, and the point in the imperialist policy is precisely that the absence of industrialization on a larger scale does not only deprive the natives of "gainful employment" as proletarians, but also deprives the abundant domestic capitals of investment outlets and profit chances. No economic interpretation can explain why profit chances were deliberately shunned for a century and more by all imperialist countries.

The real answer emerges from the racialist principle invariably applied by the white lords. The reason why the natives were

not admitted to proletarian employment by capitalism is that this would have been too good for them. Industrial employment invariably makes men more efficient; it trains them. Even to begin with, it requires a certain minimum training, mainly in reading and writing; and it includes a large number of somewhat higher functions, of foremen and the like, who must bring with them some understanding of rational organization and will acquire more of such understanding in their jobs. Because the industrial-proletarian existence is definitely higher than that of the degraded, declassed colonials, therefore the members of the inferior race cannot be admitted to it. The way to shut them out is to bar them from schools, possibly on the pretext that they are too unintelligent anyway, or without any pretext at all. Where different races are available, one may divide them by grooming one for somewhat higher functions, to lord it over the other. When they are not available, it is safer to omit any education of natives altogether. They might use their newly acquired knowledge and efficiency for subversive activity. The history of western industry itself makes it clear that—exploitation or not and Marxism or not—industrial employment starts a road whose end is beyond control. Industry may be a way upward, and to leave the natives "in their place" is the only safe thing.

This is imperialism. That it is economic imperialism is more than doubtful because it sacrifices profit, which could be had only by capitalist employment of the natives, to a policy of racial superiority, which keeps them on a still lower plane. Racial superiority is a static principle, a principle of stagnation; and whatever else one may criticize in capitalism it is not a principle of stagnation; it set the entire social dynamic of the modern age in motion. To have been excluded by white imperialism from this dynamic and kept in stagnation is the principle grievance of the awakening colored world, in our southern states as in India and Java.

If racial discrimination is not a principle of capitalism, it nevertheless can be combined with capitalism, at least in a limited way, as can be seen from those colonial white-owned industries where the upper and lower functions are strictly reserved for the upper and lower races respectively. More generally, racial discrimination and capitalism resemble each other, and can be reconciled inasmuch as both established inequality and privileged positions; the capitalist aristocracy of the motherland is the racial aristocracy in the colony, reserving for itself not only the positions in government and administration but also the best sites for country homes and possibly the best lands for agricultural and commercial use. In addition, being a principle of inequality, it may establish an alliance with the native feudal caste, whose assignment it is to keep the natives divided and the masses in stagnant dependence. But all this does not refute the proposition that capitalism as such is not simply identified with the racial discrimination of imperialism. On the other hand, white imperialism often did bring certain improvements to the native life; it was not the British who introduced or maintained the most vicious caste system of the world in India, and the lowest pariahs were slightly better off for their presence. In general the picture of imperialism can be described as the system in which the white lords sit on top of the native social structure, leaving it more or less untouched and stagnant, after destroying its crafts by cheap competition and using the ensuing poverty to force the production and exportation of raw materials for the industries of the motherland.

III.

Capitalism is not in itself a system of racial discrimination and is not identical with, although wedded with, the imperialism which is such discrimination. Capitalism is the system of social inequality which spontaneously emerges from a system of unchecked individual liberty for the pursuit of private interests, where everyone forges ahead as best he can. But capitalism is unequalitarian in social effect, not in legal

setup. Legal discrimination is the very opposite of capitalism, according even to the most radical eulogists of capitalism, such as Hayek; equality before the law regardless of economic and social status, is the greatest of capitalism's virtues, however often it be violated by the practice of the courts. The enormous efficacy of the appeal to self-interest and exclusive self-responsibility was possible only because there was complete legal certainty, complete anonymity before the law. Equality before the law is integral to bourgeois capitalism and the tie through which it is joined to democracy. Legal liberty and equality, this is both capitalism and democracy. That legal equality is essential to democracy needs not discussion. But imperialism is legal discrimination, and a blow in the face of everything the bourgeoisie stands for in history. Yet it is precisely the democracies which practice it in their colonies, and not only in the declining stage of capitalism.

How shall we understand this?

The obvious answer is the distortion of the true relationship between liberty and equality in our democracy. We constantly congratulate ourselves on our liberty, e.g. in our dealings with the Russians. But that Jefferson and Lincoln were egalitarians we never mention; and we permit even ministers of the Gospel to proclaim from the pulpit that individualism is the doctrine of Christianity. In the eyes of Russian Christendom, long before communism, this libertarian rationalist individualism was just another name for egoism and rapaciousness; and anyway community, order, justice, equality do not measure up to individualism and liberty in our scale of values. The liberty of rational interests without community, justice, and social equality is the liberty of the strong to subdue the weak. Because democracy in its libertarian presumption did not care for social justice and equality, it permitted the financially strong to exploit the financially weak in capitalism. Because it did not care for legal equality it permitted domestic economic rule to be rounded out by colo-

nial rule over the weak colored races. The liberty of the West is discredited in the eyes of the colored world as the liberty for oppression, and what matters to them is the equality of status which we have too long withheld from them and are only slowly and grudgingly preparing to concede to them as they brace themselves for their vengeance.

The strict observance of ethnic and racial equality is the greatest asset of communism, in the world-wide contest. Its economic interpretation of social life, according to which society is not only ultimately, but should clearly and without friction be determined by economic considerations, comes down, in the practice of our own day, to putting industrial rationality supreme. Communism is totalitarian because an industrial system is one and requires unified management; that is why the economic interpretation of history is to communism the guarantee of both its right and its victory. In this picture national and racial segregation and discrimination have no function whatsoever; they are plainly irrational and must be repressed. It is easy to see how both the premise and the application coincide with the natural desires of the colonial peoples.

We do not put industrial rationality supreme; we are not totalitarian. To break

the iron grip of industrial rationality, in the form of either capitalism or communism, on society and its future is our concern. But this does not mean that we can afford to ignore the industrial rationality; we try to control it, to make it subservient to higher values. Ethnic and racial equality is a value inherent in industrial rationality, although essentially independent of it; it is the denial of imperialism. But there is in industrial rationality an ingredient of functional inequality, which seems to be quite logically accepted by the communists ("equality is a petty bourgeois prejudice") and does not seem to bother the merging colonial peoples as long as they know this functional inequality in their few industries only as coincident with racial inequality. That is, to their point of view, the functional inequality in the combination disappears under the racial inequality. Only as they shake off the yoke of racial inequality, will they face the problem of what to do with the functional inequality of industrial life, whether to submit to it or control it. For the democratic world of the West, however, there is no choice. Racial inequality and functional inequality have poisoned our democracy; if it is to live we have to destroy the irrationality of the first and to control the rationality of the second.

News of the Fellowship

For the first time since pre-war days the Frontier Fellowship left New York for its Spring Conference. The meetings at Bound Brook, N. J., May 19-20, attracted a good attendance, including members from some distance, and gave opportunity for sustained consideration of the program and problems of the Fellowship.

Discussion of the world situation centered in meetings led by Richard Fagley, of the Federal Council of Churches, and Sherwood Eddy. Dr. Fagley's balanced presentation of the pros and cons of the North Atlantic Pact was followed by a thorough discussion. There was general agreement with the speaker that our historical situation was such that the pact was a dangerous expedient, but that failure to ratify it would be even more dangerous. Dr. Eddy gave a far-ranging report of his recent trip through Asia, with emphasis on the situation in Japan, Korea, China, and India. He opposed any further attempt of the U. S. to bolster up the Kuomintang.

A more theologically-centered meeting took up a discussion of Reinhold Niebuhr's new book, *Faith and History*. A panel, including Roger Shinn, John Hutchison, and Will Herberg, discussed the book, and Dr. Niebuhr replied.

Alexander Miller and John Oliver Nelson reported respectively on the Iona community in Scotland and Kirkridge in this country. A spirited discussion followed, centering on the relationship between "retreat" movements and social action.

Plans and Projects

The business meeting included a thorough discussion of the program of the Fellowship. The executive committee was commissioned to draw up a budget, as was done last year. Contributions have not yet come up to the current budget; the treasury is at present in fairly sound shape, but it has not been possible to finance all of the projects for expansion which were included

in the budget. Membership has shown a steady, unspectacular increase throughout the past year.

The Fellowship voted to give support to two movements which contribute, in distinctive and creative ways, to the purposes of the group. The first is the East Harlem Protestant Parish, on which a report appears in this journal. The second is the German center at Bad Boll, where an educational program relates Christian faith to lay vocations. It was voted to attempt to raise \$500 for the first and \$200 for the second project, during the next fiscal year.

Despite the budgetary problems of the Fellowship, there was enthusiasm for the attempt to support both of these programs. The organization has traditionally contributed to various efforts to relate Christianity to society. In recent years members and friends have contributed several thousand dollars to the Fellowship's program of food parcels for families which had resisted tyranny in Europe. With the gradual decrease in that program, it is hoped that contributions can be found for these two significant projects.

Results of elections to the National Council and the Editorial Board are shown on the inside front cover of this journal.

* * *

A letter has been received from Charles West, a staunch member of the Fellowship and contributor to this journal. He is staying at his missionary post in occupied China. His wife and children have gone to the Philippine Islands.

The letter was written from Hangchow, China, on the day before the expected arrival of Communist troops. According to the newspapers, the Communists have long since taken the city. Charles West was meeting the situation exactly as any who knew him or followed his articles would have expected.

R. L. S.

BOOK REVIEWS

FAITH AND HISTORY. By Reinhold Niebuhr. New York: Scribner, 1949. 257 pp. \$3.50.

Man in the middle of the 20th century has belatedly begun to realize the tragic discrepancy between modern hopes and modern realities. A culture which staked too much on illusions of optimism finds itself impotent before an age dominated by totalitarianism and war; history, in a sense, has betrayed its votaries. It is this devastating human predicament which has formed the major secular theme of Reinhold Niebuhr's work. In its terms he has written the most profound and penetrating critique of modern culture which our time has produced. And, in the context of the failure of liberalism, he has constructed our age's most comprehensive restatement of the Christian interpretation of man.

In *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941, 1943) Dr. Niebuhr revived the traditional insights of Christianity with a wisdom and cogency which vindicated the Christian analysis of human experience even for many for whom Christian ontology had no reality. In *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (1945), he demonstrated that the Christian conception of human nature with its complexity and ambiguity provided a far more solid foundation for democracy than the simple optimism about man with which democracy has been conventionally associated. Now in *Faith and History* he turns his attention to the role which history has played in the breakdown of modern culture. In face of the contemporary belief in the redemptive character of human history, Dr. Niebuhr argues that we must return to the Christian faith which tells us that human fulfillment is not possible within history.

For modern man, Dr. Niebuhr points out, history has become more and more unequivocally the story of man's increasing power and freedom. It has claimed to contain within itself the solution to the dilem-

mas of human existence; and it has held out to man the promise that, with the increase in his knowledge and in his technical expertise, he would become the master of his historical destiny. A particularly vicious form of this modern fallacy lies in the conviction that the application of the scientific method to human affairs would result, once a few minor distortions and defects have been corrected, in a working science of man and society. In all its versions, whether bourgeois-humanitarian, Social Darwinist, or Marxist, the modern conception of history has embodied a fatal weakness for idolatry. Modern man, in other words, has always tended to transmute his partial insights and fragmentary truths into absolutes and thereby to make his own life into the center of history's meaning.

What have been the consequences of this modern view of history? The central consequence, Dr. Niebuhr finds, has been to conceal from man a sense of his own limitations and thus to lure him into a political and intellectual arrogance that can end only in disaster. "He who would act the angel acts the brute," wrote Pascal, and therewith summed up the tragedy of twentieth-century totalitarianism. Modern history locates the source of evil everywhere except in man. "The whole structure of the modern interpretation of life and history," Niebuhr writes, "was, in short, a very clever contrivance of human pride to obscure the weakness and the insecurity of man; of the human conscience to hide the sin into which men fall through their efforts to overcome their weakness and insecurity; and of human sloth to evade responsibility."

Against the modern view of history Dr. Niebuhr poses the Christian view, founded upon the affirmation that "the life, death, and resurrection of Christ represent an event in history, in and through which a disclosure of the whole meaning of history occurs." Absolute certainty concerning the meaning of this event, of course, is a gift

f grace; it is, as Dr. Niebuhr says, "knowledge beyond the capacity of human wisdom." But the distinction of his analysis is his success in restating Christian insights with such irresistible relevance to contemporary experience that even those who have no decisive faith in the supernatural find their own reading of experience and of history given new and significant dimensions.

Thus from a secular viewpoint Niebuhr's affirmation of divine sovereignty in history may be less instructive than his consequent conception of history as "filled with man's proud and pretentious efforts to defy the divine sovereignty, to establish himself as good by his power or virtue, his wisdom or presight." Without passing upon the final significance of this statement, one can accept it as a profoundly illuminating insight into human experience. And from it one must conclude that man's participation in history is fragmentary and incomplete and that man himself is inescapably tainted with moral ambiguity—two conclusions which are incompatible with contemporary views of history but which are fully compatible with contemporary experience.

One great strength of Dr. Niebuhr's work lies in the essential sanity and compassion which inform his judgments. In the service of Christian truth he has erected a powerful indictment of contemporary culture. But Niebuhr is no Savonarola, in whom a recoil from present complacencies could lead to a more burning arrogance and a more demonic fury of his own. Perceiving with almost sympathy the complex realm of freedom and necessity in which man exists, he neither scoffs at freedom in the name of necessity, nor minimizes necessity in the name of freedom. The possibilities of evil within man, for example, do not mean that institutions are irrelevant to the emergence of evil. Unlike other religious teachers who content themselves with obeisances toward humility, Niebuhr has the essential humility to regard himself as subject to general human limitations and frailties. He possesses himself to a remarkable degree that he somewhere calls "a wisdom which recognizes the limits of human knowledge

and a humility which knows the limits of all human powers."

Thus his work is a critique of modern culture and not a rejection of it. He is perfectly aware that the Christian view of life contains its own tendencies toward idolatry and the creation of false absolutes. These tendencies manifest themselves both in the undue worship of institutions and in the undue abstraction of ideas. The failure to relate the truths of faith to other knowledge and experience, for example, leads to a dangerous cultural obscurantism. Dr. Niebuhr has no fear of the truths discovered by modern social, psychological and historical sciences. "There is nothing incompatible," he writes, "between a Biblical conception of a dynamic history and the modern view of historical development if the modern errors of regarding historical development as self-explanatory and of equating it with redemption are avoided. If the affinities which exist between the two views are fully explored, some insights, drawn from the modern view, may, in fact, serve to correct some of the errors which have crept into the traditional statements of the Christian view."

Faith and History is written with Dr. Niebuhr's usual vigor, erudition, and precision of expression. It is an indispensable contribution to the revaluation of our culture with which this age is inevitably concerned and in which Dr. Niebuhr has already played so brilliant and distinguished a role.

ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.

PROTESTANT CHURCHES AND INDUSTRIAL AMERICA. By Henry F. May. Harper, 1949. \$3.50.

This book is an extremely important contribution to our understanding of American Protestantism. It fills two gaps in the literature dealing with the rise of the Social Gospel. It deals thoroughly with the immediate background against which the Social Gospel emerged as a corrective. It also shows how the Social Gospel was received by the Churches. The many studies of the history of the Social Gospel, of which C. Howard Hopkins' *The Rise of the Social*

Gospel in American Protestantism is the best, describe the history of that movement, but they throw little light on the previous period and they neglect the relation between the Social Gospel and the life of Protestantism as a whole, including the strong opposition to the Social Gospel at the time of its greatest strength.

The contrast between the social conservatism of American Protestantism until the eighteen eighties with the new spirit that came in with the Social Gospel movement is made extremely vivid in this extremely well documented book. The Social Gospel, as represented by its best leaders, especially Gladden and Rauschenbusch, can be seen here as a truly prophetic response on the part of American Protestants to the problems of modern industrial society.

The story of Protestant economic conservatism that is told in the first part of this book is most illuminating, not least because it shows how wrong the wise of a particular generation can be. It is a story of Christians who did not have the slightest suspicion that Christianity meant judgment upon their way of life. Professor May describes the teaching that he calls "clerical laissez faire." The economists were, for the most part, ministers, and they saw in the laws of economics, as described in the text-books which they wrote, the eternal laws of God. As May says, "support for the moral, political and economic *status quo* was ingrained in American Protestantism by habit and history." Against all forms of American radicalism, for example that of the followers of Jefferson and Jackson, the American churches upheld the *status quo* with a sanctified complacency. This was true until the last two decades in the nineteenth century when a break in this economic orthodoxy came. It was assumed that it was against the law of God to interfere with the iron law of wages, that poverty was the fault of the poor, that labor unions were wrong and that strikes were wicked, that the existing order was the best possible. The basic assumptions of this social philosophy that was preached in the name of Christianity are presented by one of the leading economists of the period, Francis

Wayland, in the following sentences: "If God have made labor necessary to our well being, in our present state; if he have seen before us sufficient rewards to stimulate us to labor; and if he have attached to idleness correspondent punishments, it is manifest that the intention of this constitution will not be accomplished, unless both of these classes of motives are allowed to operate upon man" (quoted p. 15). Following this same doctrine it was assumed in the words of another clerical economist, Bishop Alonzo Potter, that trade unions disregarded the "laws of nature" which are "nothing less than the laws of God."

These ideas, held with the utmost complacency, were characteristic of the Church press and of the greatest Protestant leaders of this period, including such figures as Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Bushnell and Phillips Brooks. The only differences were in the extent to which economic complacency was combined with Christian compassion. Sometimes that combination produced an idea that has often been a temptation to Christians but which is startling when you read it in *The Independent* (1874): "The poor we have with us always; and this is not the greatest of our hardships, but the choicest of our blessings. If there is anything that a Christian may feel thankful for, it is the privilege of lifting a little of the load of some of his heavily-burdened neighbors." This is quoted in a section of the book that has the appropriate title: "The Summit of Complacency, 1861-1876."

What happened so that the men who occupy the same positions in the Protestant Churches in this decade that these men occupied before 1880 have come to regard such ideas as false and, in some cases, as fantastic? Professor May shows how this change came about. Central in the force that produced it was the actual social experience of sensitive Christians in connection with depressions and labor disturbances in the last decades of the century, especially their first hand contact with life in the industrial cities.

During the period of greatest economic complacency the frontier was open, so

as still possible to speak with some plausibility about poverty or unemployment as the fault of the poor or unemployed. This idea was refuted by events. Professor May describes three types of protest against this economic complacency. The first he calls "Conservative Social Christianity." This is strongly anti-Socialist but it is mildly reformist and it represents an early troubled response to city poverty. The second is the main-line Social Gospel movement which is associated with Washington Gladden, especially before the turn of the century. The third is what he calls "Radical Social Christianity," represented in different ways by Father O. S. Huntingdon, W. D. P. Bliss, and George D. Herron. It was the middle movement that had greatest influence on the Churches. The last seems to have the author's greatest sympathy. It is interesting to note from this study that the Episcopal Church was the first of the denominations to be strongly affected by this new social outlook and the Methodist Church last of the last.

This new Social Christianity in its various forms was controlled by the same optimistic temper that characterized the earlier conservatism but it was optimism about what could be done to reform society rather than complacency about the existing situation. It was in part mistaken but it did not make men callous to human need. It had its illusions which those of us who are wise after many events can easily spot, but its pioneers did break up social orthodoxy that was a blight on the American Churches. It is sometimes said that the Social Gospel secularized Christianity. There is truth in the claim that their enthusiasm some of its representatives did reduce Christianity to the level of a social program. But it would be difficult to imagine a more idolatrous type of secularism than the identification of Christianity with the economic *status quo* which once dominated Protestantism, even though it was often accompanied by sincere and deep personal piety. In its time and on its own level the Social Gospel went far

to deliver the Churches from "clerical *laissez faire*." We owe to it in large part the fact that, in spite of the continuation of social conservatism among Protestants, the leaders of the Church have a constructive attitude toward labor and the progressive social movements of our time that is far removed from the attitude of the clergy to Jefferson and Jackson.

JOHN C. BENNETT

MEANING IN HISTORY. By Karl Löwith. University of Chicago Press, 1949. 259 pp. \$4.00.

Karl Löwith is one of the German exiles who has enriched the intellectual life of America. A philosopher with penetrating Christian insight, he is soon joining the faculty of the New School in New York.

As a study in history from the Christian perspective, this book is bound to be compared with Reinhold Niebuhr's *Faith and History*, which appeared shortly after. The methods of the two books are sufficiently different that they supplement each other well. Niebuhr deals constantly with current and perennial problems, illuminating them with extensive references to the thought of ancient and modern writers in many fields, but seldom expounding the thought of others for its own sake. Löwith, by contrast, offers separate chapters on various thinkers, working out his own interpretation in the course of the exposition.

Löwith's profound and scholarly treatment starts with modern thinkers and, in the search for an adequate interpretation of history, moves back through the ages, in reverse chronological order, to the Biblical view of history. This development includes chapters on Burckhardt, Marx, Hegel, the French Enlightenment, Joachim of Floris, Augustine, and several others.

Brilliant criticisms are levelled against all systems which try to force history, with its unpredictabilities and irrationalities, into any logical pattern. The author has more sympathy for a skeptic like Burckhardt than for Christians with a neat doctrine of Providence. Like Niebuhr, Löwith finds that Jewish-Christian futurism overcame the classical cyclical view of history,

but then degenerated in modern secularism into a false faith in progress. And like Tillich, Löwith has a doctrine of *kairos* (the "fullness of time," the moment of significant historical time).

But more than Niebuhr or Tillich, Löwith represents the tendencies of "continental" theology. History has meaning only to faith, which interprets it in terms of radical eschatology and a city of God which stands in stark discontinuity with the earthly city. History is then seen as "a discipline of suffering, an opportunity for the creature to return to its creator—no more and no less" (142-3). "As an eschatological message of the Kingdom of God the theology of the New Testament is essentially unconcerned with the political history of this world" (189). "Similarly, the message of the New Testament is not an appeal to historical action but to repentance" (196). These quotations do not do justice to the power of this book, or to the author's discerning discussion of many philosophies of history. But they do represent his own belief and emphasis.

Those who would too quickly criticize such views as defeatism would do well to remember that in a tragic era the man who sees that "the meaning of history" is "the meaning of suffering by historical action" (p. 3) may be better able to bear historical responsibility than one who has fed on false optimism about a historical future. Yet must we reject as false heresies all the Christian visions of a renewal of society? Can we say nothing of the Social Gospel except that it was wrong? Niebuhr's chapter on "Fulfillments in History and the Fulfillment of History" offers a truer union than does Löwith of Biblical Christianity's historical dynamism with a sense of transcendent judgment upon all historical accomplishments—at least for this reviewer. But if he hears of a debate between the two

authors on this issue, he is ready to buy a reserved seat.

ROGER L. SHINN

MAN'S DISORDER AND GOD'S DESIGN. An omnibus volume of the Amsterdam Assembly Series, prepared under the auspices of the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches. New York: Harper, 1949. \$5.00.

A review of this rich and wide-ranging volume is beyond the scope of this journal or the competence of the reviewer. But the importance of the book demands that it at least be mentioned here. This one volume, running close to a thousand pages contains the Message of the World Council of Churches, meeting at Amsterdam last summer, and the four complete books published in connection with the four areas of study.

This journal has already printed and commented on the report on "The Church and the Disorder of Society" (Autumn 1948). The book contains the studies by ecumenical leaders which led up to the decisions at Amsterdam. Similarly the volume includes the studies and final reports in the other three areas, dealing with the nature of the church, the evangelical mission of the church, and the church's responsibility in the international disorder.

The volume includes the work of some forty odd authors, plus the results of the combined thinking of many more leaders. Here is illumination on many facets of these various problems. Three leaders of the Frontier Fellowship contribute chapters: Niebuhr, Bennett, and Tillich. Among the many other authors known to members of the Fellowship are Aulén, Barth, Florovsky, Visser 't Hooft, Kraemer, Brunner, Barth, Pauck, Oldham, Hromadka, Dulles et al.

ROGER L. SHINN

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